

CLAIMS

1. (amended) A process for preparing trinitrotoluene (TNT) comprising the steps of:
 - (a) at a temperature of less than about 60°C treating toluene with nitric acid having a concentration of from about 90% to about 99% by weight to produce dinitrotoluene (DNT), such that the DNT is produced at a purity greater than about 98% by weight; and
 - (b) then treating the DNT formed in step (a) with nitric acid having a concentration of from about 98% to about 99% by weight and about one molar equivalent of trifluoromethanesulfonic acid to produce the TNT, such that the TNT is produced at a purity greater than about 98% by weight and without the need to use sulfuric acid.
2. (cancelled)
3. (amended) The process of claim [[2]] 1 wherein in step (a) the nitric acid has a concentration of from about 98% to about 99% by weight.
4. (cancelled)
5. (amended) The process of claim [[4]] 1 wherein step (a) is carried out at a temperature of less than about 30°C.
6. (cancelled)
7. (amended) The process of claim [[6]] 1 wherein in step (a) the DNT is produced at purity of greater than about 99% by weight.
8. (cancelled)
9. (cancelled)

10. (amended) The process of claim [[9]].1 wherein in step (b) the TNT is produced at a purity greater than about 99% by weight.

11. (amended) A process for preparing trinitrotoluene (TNT) from dinitrotoluene (DNT) comprising the step[[s]] of:

(a) ~~treating toluene with nitric acid having a concentration of from about 90% to about 99% by weight at a temperature of less than about 60°C to produce dinitrotoluene (DNT); and~~

(b) ~~then treating the DNT formed in step (b) with nitric acid having a concentration of from about 98% to about 99% by weight and~~ about one molar equivalent of trifluoromethanesulfonic acid to produce TNT, wherein the TNT is produced at a purity greater than about 98% by weight and without the need to use sulfuric acid.

12. (cancelled)

13. (cancelled)

14. (amended) The process of claim 11 wherein ~~in step (a) the DNT is produced at~~ has a purity of greater than about 98% by weight.

15. (amended) The process of claim 14 wherein ~~in step (a) the DNT is produced at~~ has a purity of greater than about 99% by weight.

16. (cancelled)

17. (amended) The process of claim [[16]] 11 ~~in step (b)~~ wherein the TNT is produced at a purity greater than about 99% by weight.

18. - 21. (cancelled)